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THE NURSE'S LOYALTY TO THE DOCTOR

DEAR EDITOR: Recently I had a case in a small town nearby for a doctor for whom none of the other nurses on our registry had ever had a case. I found the patient a two-year-old boy with a severe case of dysentery. The only nourishment the doctor was having given was sweetened albumen water, containing spiritus frumenti, a most distasteful mixture. Every effort on the child's part to swallow this and the various medicines which were ordered, resulted in their immediate regurgitation. I kept an unusually close record and always handed it to the doctor when he called, but he gave it only a careless glance and seemed to attach very little importance to it, even when I ventured to call his attention to the statement that the child's frequent defecations had become entirely mucus, and that a portion of the bowel protruded during evacuation.

The doctor called several times a day and always left the patient in a frenzy of rage by his persistent efforts to take the child's pulse, though the baby was an unusually docile child, who had taken an unaccountable dislike to the doctor, a circumstance which seemed to afford the latter considerable amusement.

When I had been on the case a week, the baby begged so piteously for something to eat that I asked the doctor's permission to give him milk. The child drank it greedily, but I gave it sparingly, and saved the diapers so that the doctor could see the result. The little patient was by this time exceedingly weak, and lay for hours at a time in a state bordering on coma. It seemed to me that he was slowly dying before my eyes, and yet the doctor gave no new orders. The young parents, from whom a violent death had taken their only other child, a short time before, were beside themselves with grief and anxiety, and kept asking me if they ought not to get another doctor. During my hospital training "loyalty to the doctor" was so firmly impressed upon my mind that I could not bring myself to advise this, and yet it seemed a dreadful thing to let that adorable baby die when proper care could save him.

At this juncture, the doctor was called away by the illness of his mother, and left, promising to return early the next morning. He missed his train and did not get back till the next evening, when he came to see the patient, so intoxicated that he could scarcely walk across the room. He told me that his mother was to undergo an operation, and that he would be gone several days. I asked him what doctor he was going to have on the case during his absence, and he said that no doctor was needed, and that he would leave orders and medicine that would do until his return. I reminded him that the child was unable to retain any medicine and he said, "Oh, I guess he'll keep it down all right." Then he went home, and when the patient's father went after him for a neighbor a short time later, he was unable to arouse him from his drunken sleep.

"He hasn't been so well to-day, has he?" asked the mother anxiously, as we stood by the bed looking down at the inert little figure. Just then the father entered and said, "That man is dead drunk, did you know it?" I nodded, and the father continued, "I don't care whether he likes it or not, if you say to get another doctor we'll get one." Then I told them that if they wanted the doctor from their home town, the physician in charge certainly could not resent their calling him, under the circumstances.

When I left the case, a few days later, because they were unable to keep a nurse longer than was absolutely necessary, the baby was improving, and waved me a weak but smiling "by by." While thanking me for my care of the child,

the mother told me that when the attending physician found that another doctor had been called, he told the parents that their baby would have been well long ago if that nurse had not kept giving him something to eat that did not agree with him.

I am aware that this sounds overdrawn, utterly impossible, but it is a plain statement of facts. It is not likely that such conditions will arise twice during one nurse's experience, but I should like to know what course some others would have pursued under like circumstances. N. S.

AROUND-THE-WORLD LETTERS

DEAR EDITOR: In Manila I found friends on the pier, nurses from the Division Hospital, and it was a welcome change to spend a night with them.

The most distinctive experience on the return cruise was the side trip to Agra. I was so anxious to see the Taj Mahal, and so afraid something might occur to prevent my getting there, that I kept very still about going, and was tucked away out of sight on the first tender going ashore, long before it was time to start. I did not go with the specially-arranged party because their accommodations are booked in advance and there was so much uncertainty about my going. So I slipped away to Cook's office, that faithful friend of the lone woman in strange lands, and booked to travel that night in the Punjab Mail.

Travelling in India is unlike any other travelling in my experience. There are no porters, no conductors, no towels, no bedding, so you carry towels and bedding, and after my experience I would add, a dust cloth. If you are wise you carry a bottle of drinking water, and if you are English, besides, you carry a tea basket. If you have money, you take with you a bearer, who carries your luggage, puts you in your compartment, and withdraws to a third-class carriage, reappearing at stations to salaam, make up your bed, bring tea, or offer any other service, such as guarding your possessions while you are in the dining-car. The beds are merely the hard leather-covered benches running the length of the compartment, the upper berth letting down on a chain suspended from above. There is an electric fan, and a stationary table. The doors and windows are provided with screens, and smoked glass panes, to temper the glare of the sun. After you know how it is done, it is a very comfortable mode of travel. You have room to move about, you can lie down during the day, the lavatory is at hand, and you indulge in the comfort of a kimono, if you are in the ladies' compartment, which is a great luxury in such heat. The Punjab Mail is the fastest train, and it took twenty-two hours. It was exceedingly hot, dusty, and in the main not interesting. We arrived at Agra in the cool of the evening, and decided to go at once to the Taj Mahal, and have dinner later. We drove out under the soft tropical night sky, past the little oriental shops, through a lovely park, drawing up finally before a massive gateway, built of red sandstone, inlaid with black marble traced in flower designs. Standing in the shadow of this impressive structure, we saw before us that which gives one the sensation of a privileged being admitted to the sacred intimacy of beauty. Beauty expressed in architecture, revealing both the artist and above even that the lover. It seemed to us, as a faint little baby moon slowly rose, casting a silvery light on the scene, that this wonderful thing was suspended from the mysterious sky, and would float away before our eyes. Fair as a newly opened lily, pearly white as if just completed, it has stood there for over two hundred years. It took ten thousand workmen twenty years to build it. Before it is a long marble basin,